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Curios and Relics

Furniture

Table

Emancipation Proclamation

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

HISTORIC LINCOLN TABLE.

1911
Winstead (Conn.) Dispatch to the New York Times: Ownership of the table on which Abraham Lincoln signed the proclamation of emancipation will pass from former United States Treasurer Daniel N. Morgan of Bridgeport to the state of Connecticut as soon as State Librarian George S. Goddard prepares for its reception, a vault in Memorial hall, Hartford.

Mr. Morgan, in a letter to the librarian, describes the table as very simply built. He has documents to identify the table as that on which the proclamation was signed. He acquired the historical relic while treasurer.

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**BUTLER PA EAGLE
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1931.**

**LINCOLN TABLE MAY BE
PLACED IN WHITE HOUSE**
HARTFORD, Conn.—The table on which Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation may take its place with other collections in the Lincoln Room at the White House in Washington.
The table, now an exhibit in Memorial Hall in the State Library here, was given to the state by Daniel Nash Morgan, former United States Treasurer under President Cleveland.
The suggestion that it be donated or lent to the government was made by Mrs. Carl Hanna of Cleveland.

Which Desk Was Lincoln's?

See June 1934
**Connecticut Thought It Had Original Piece
Until Ike Hoover's Story Appeared.**

HARTFORD, April 11 (A. P.).—The whereabouts of the desk on which President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation was a moot question today, but so far as Connecticut is concerned, that historical piece of furniture is in the State Library.

A statement in the published memoirs of the late Irwin H. Hoover, White House usher for many years, that when President Hoover moved into the White House in 1929 he (Irwin Hoover) had the famous desk, brought a storm of protest from authorities who said they can prove it's all a mistake.

years before he turned it over to his native State, and Godard believes the desk now in the White House is the one Burgdorf exchanged with Lincoln.

George S. Godard, State Librarian, is one of the stoutest defenders of what he terms the truth about the situation and he can exhibit documents as proof of his assertions.

When told about the statement, Godard said the late Daniel Nash Morgan of Bridgeport, who was Treasurer of the United States under President Cleveland from 1893 to 1897, presented the authentic desk to the state and that ever since 1912 it has reposed in a specially constructed vault in the Library.

Godard's story, substantiated by affidavits, is that the original desk was owned for many years by Louis Burgdorf of Washington, who gave it to Morgan on June 7, 1894, in exchange for another.

Burgdorf was a White House messenger from 1848 until just before Lincoln's assassination, and he served under President Polk, Taylor and Lincoln.

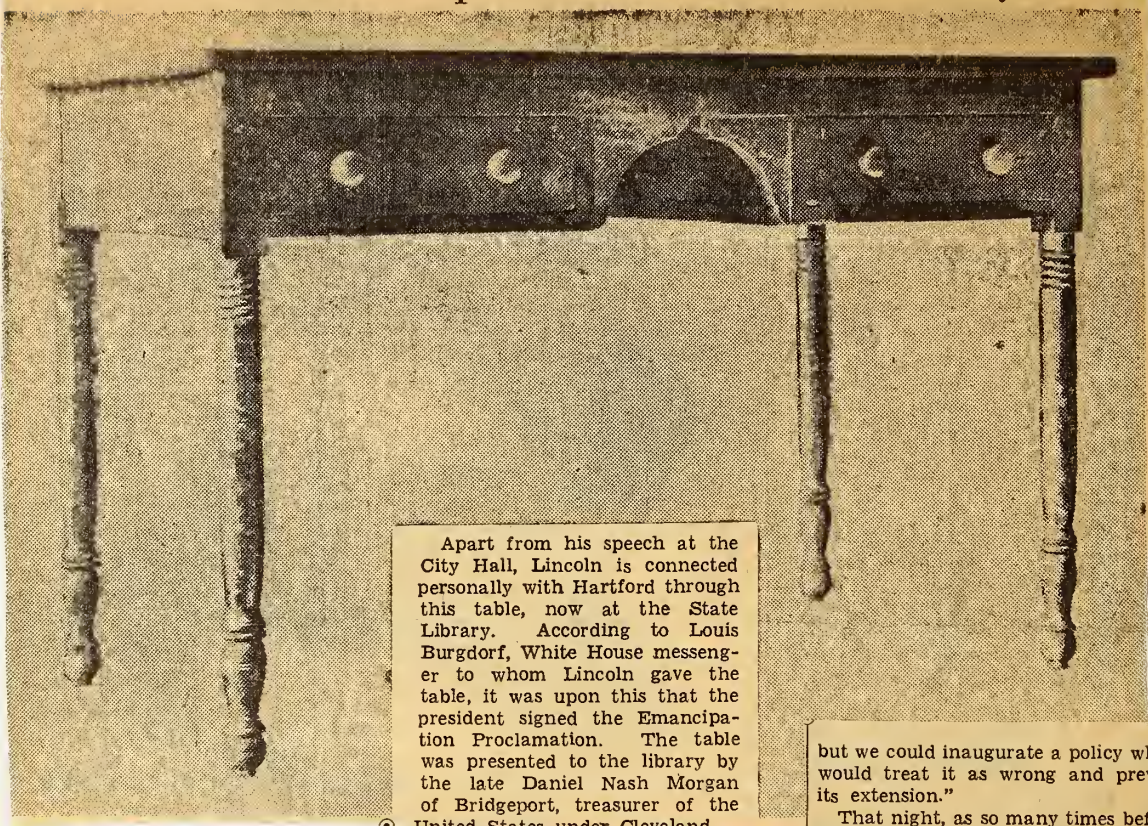
In a sworn statement he turned over to Morgan at the time he made the gift, Burgdorf said he was in the White House when the President signed the famous proclamation and that he held the document on the desk, later given to him by Lincoln with the pen that scrawled the signature.

Burgdorf said in his statement that he gave Lincoln another desk and kept the original at his home in Washington. Through Lincoln's kindness, Burgdorf said, he obtained a place in the Treasury Department, where he remained until Morgan's time.

The truthfulness of Burgdorf's statement was attested to by other Treasury employees at the time, some of whom had known Burgdorf since 1866.

Morgan kept the table fifteen

Lincoln's 'Emancipation Desk' at State Library



Apart from his speech at the City Hall, Lincoln is connected personally with Hartford through this table, now at the State Library. According to Louis Burgdorf, White House messenger to whom Lincoln gave the table, it was upon this that the president signed the Emancipation Proclamation. The table was presented to the library by the late Daniel Nash Morgan of Bridgeport, treasurer of the United States under Cleveland.

Hartford Heard Lincoln Declare Against Slavery

Great Emancipator Spoke Here in Spring of 1860
As Candidate of Republican Party and
Enemy of Human Bondage

Seventy-six years ago, March 5, Abraham Lincoln apologized in the Hartford City Hall for "the slovenliness of his personal appearance."

He apologized "for not having even changed his linen." Mr. Lincoln, it appears, "had just arrived from New Hampshire and he had hoped to arrive here much earlier."

The national election was coming on that November. The issue of the day was Slavery.

Feeling was high. It was high in Hartford.

The local press lead off: "Abe Lincoln at the City Hall. Another Republican Rally! The Hall Crowded to Excess! The Question of Slavery Philosophically Considered! The Danger of Indifference."

Greeted With Applause

"The Republicans," says the report, "met at the City Hall on Monday evening to listen to a speech from the Hon. Abraham Lincoln of Illinois. The hall was filled before the appointed time for the appearance of the speaker, and when he took his position on the stand, he was greeted with ap-

plause which was almost deafening."

Lincoln's talk was characteristic. It was simple, cogent and home-spun.

Slavery was the prevailing question before the nation. "Why can't this question which we all desire so much to be settled, be satisfactorily arranged?"

"The reason is, that while we all agree that we want it settled, one faction wants to settle it one way, a second has a different plan, and a third still another. Each pulls in a different direction. All desire its settlement, but differ in the method of doing it, and none of them being in a decided majority, have ever been able to accomplish the object."

Dealt With Slavery

"If, then, we of the Republican party who think slavery is a wrong and would mould public opinion to the opinion to the fact that it is wrong should get control of the central government, I do not say we would or should meddle with it where it exists,

but we could inaugurate a policy which would treat it as wrong and prevent its extension."

That night, as so many times before, Lincoln drew his illustrations from simple things.

"I met Mr. Classius M. Clay in the cars at New Haven one day last week and it was my first opportunity to take him by the hand. There was an old gentleman in the car seated in front of us whose coat collar was turned far down upon his shoulders.

"I saw directly that he had a large wen on his neck. I said to Mr. Clay, 'That wen represents slavery, it bears the same relation to that man that slavery does to the country. That wen is a great evil. The man that bears it will say so, but he does not dare to cut it out. He bleeds to death if he does directly. If he does not cut it out, it will shorten his life materially'."

Lincoln did not spare his opponents.

"I think that Democracy are pretty generally getting into a system of bushwhackery in this country.

"Now they are going to work at the shoe strike. I don't know that it comes into Connecticut. It goes into New Hampshire. A Democratic senator gets up in the senate chamber and pompously announces that, 'I cannot daut that this strike is thresult of the onforchunt wahfar brought aboat boy this sucktional controvussy!'"

Lincoln concluded: "Let us not be slandered from our duties or intimidated from preserving our dignity and our rights by any menace, but let us have faith that Right, Eternal Right, makes might, and as we understand our duty, so do it!"

The press reports: "Mr. Lincoln's speech was tentatively listened to, and frequently his quaint allusions and similes brought out the laughter of the crowd; and other times, his forcible arguments received their endorsement by hearty applause. The Hartford Cornet Band, which was present, then headed the procession which escorted the gentleman to the residence of his host, Mayor Allen."

Nov. 13, 1934

Lansville Times

THE CITY'S BIGGEST AND BEST EVENING NEWSPAPER

LINCOLN'S DESK 'PUZZLE' REVIVED

Connecticut Folk Say Article On Which Proclamation Signed In Library.

Hartford, Conn., April 13 (AP)—The whereabouts of the desk on which President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation was a moot question today, but so far as Connecticut is concerned, that historical piece of furniture is in the State Library.

A statement in the published memoirs of the late Irwin H. Hoover, White House usher for many years, that when President Hoover moved into the White House in 1929, he had the famous desk, brought a storm of protest from authorities who said they could not prove it's all a mistake.

George S. Godard, State librarian, said the late Daniel Nash Morgan of Bridgeport, who was Treasurer of the United States under President Cleveland from 1893 to 1897, presented the authentic desk to the State and that ever since 1912 it has reposed in a specially constructed vault in the library.

Godard's story, substantiated by af-

fidavits, is that the original desk was owned for many years by Louis Burgdorf, Washington, who gave it to Morgan on June 7, 1894.

Burgdorf was a White House messenger from 1848 until just before Lincoln's assassination and he served under Presidents Polk, Taylor, Fillmore, Pierce, Buchanan and Lincoln.

In a sworn statement he turned over to Morgan at the time he made the gift, Burgdorf said he was in the White House when the President signed the famous proclamation and that he held the document on the desk, later given to him by Lincoln together with the pen that scrawled the signature.

Burgdorf said in his statement that he gave Lincoln another desk and kept the original at his home in Washington.

Morgan kept the table fifteen years before he turned it over to his native State, and Godard believes the desk now in the White House is the one Burgdorf exchanged with Lincoln.

NEWS RELEASE

CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
CLARK STREET AT NORTH AVENUE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION TABLE

PHOTOGRAPHS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Visitors to the Chicago Historical Society will note an addition to the Lincoln memorabilia. A rather plain square table, with a top and body of crotchéd mahogany veneer and legs of solid mahogany, has taken its rightful place amongst those objects revered for their association with the Great Emancipator. Upon this table, the Emancipation Proclamation was drafted over eighty years ago, in the office of President Lincoln at the White House. In an excellent state of preservation, the table has a peculiar arrangement of drawers for papers and documents. It was presented to the Society by Miss Ellen LaMotte of Washington, D.C., along with two oak chairs also used in Lincoln's office.

Lincoln presented the table and two chairs to Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase, who had formerly been a member of the President's Cabinet, as Secretary of the Treasury. At Chase's death, the three pieces were inherited by his daughter, Mrs. Kate Chase Sprague. During her later years, Mrs. Sprague found herself in abject poverty, and sold the chairs to one Nathan Sprague in 1888. After passing through several hands, the furniture came into the possession of Miss LaMotte, and thus, through her courtesy, has reached its final resting place in the Chicago Historical Society's building, along with the many documents and affidavits of authentication.

The original draft of the Emancipation Proclamation was at one time in the possession of the Chicago Historical Society. In 1863, a request was made to Lincoln for some donation for the first Chicago Sanitary Fair, which was held in Chicago to raise funds to provide for the Union soldiers. A response from Lincoln, enclosing the original draft of the

Emancipation Proclamation with all its interlines and erasures, stated, "I had some desire to retain the paper; but if it shall contribute to the relief or comfort of the soldiers, that will be better."

At the close of the Fair, the paper was offered at public auction, purchased by Thomas B. Bryan for \$3,000.00, and donated to the Soldiers' Home in Chicago. The Board of Managers of this institution later decided to place the paper at the Chicago Historical Society. It remained in the museum's building until the great fire of 1871 when, in spite of the heroic efforts of one of the Society's officers to rescue it from the flames, it was destroyed in the holocaust.

An interesting sidelight to the acquisition of the two chairs, is the fact that they are reproduced in miniature in one of the twenty dioramas of Lincoln's life which were completed several years ago in the Society's building. This diorama shows the reading of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation by Lincoln to his Cabinet on September 22, 1862, and, as this scene took place in Lincoln's office, small models of the chairs are shown. In a painting of the Proclamation Commission, which hangs in the East corridor of the House of Representatives in the U.S. Capitol, this same scene is reproduced, and, the chairs being of an unusual design, they are easily discernible.

Many personal effects of both President and Mrs. Lincoln are exhibited in the Society's Lincoln Hall. Samples of White House china, jewelry, and the rosewood grand piano purchased by Lincoln for his wife while they were occupants of the White House are shown. The coat the President wore on the night of his assassination, his tall silk hat, large linen umbrella and grey shawl, bring one into intimate contact with the life and personality of Illinois' most illustrious citizen. The Historical Society also displays the spool bed on which the martyred President died, and the flag used to cover his body as it was carried from the Petersen House to the White House.

Editor Lincoln Love
Lincoln Life Insurance Co.
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Museum Here Gets Table-Lincoln Used in Banning Slavery

The plain, square table on which President Abraham Lincoln drafted his emancipation proclamation has been added to the Lincoln collection at the Chicago Historical society's museum. It was placed on exhibit yesterday. The table is a gift from Miss Ellen LaMotte of Washington, D. C. It has become a part of the society's extensive Lincoln collection, which includes the clothes in which President Lincoln was assassinated, the bed on which he died, furniture from his Springfield, Ill., home, and a number of Lincoln manuscripts.

Chicago Tribune, 7-14-43

Lincoln's 'Proclamation Table' Is Given to Chicago Museum

The table on which Abraham Lincoln drafted the Emancipation Proclamation and two of the chairs that went with it have been given to the Chicago Historical Society's Museum by Miss Ellen La Motte, 3115 O street N.W., it was learned today. Miss La Motte also has turned over to the society the documents authenticating the history of the furniture.

Lincoln presented the green-baized top table and chairs to Salmon P. Chase, his Secretary of the Treasury. Mr. Chase gave them to his daughter, Mrs. Kate Sprague, who in turn gave the pieces to a

colored servant. He sold them in 1870 to a Mr. Williams, Washington antique dealer. Thirty-five years ago Samuel Feland bought the furniture and his wife, Mrs. Annie D. Feland, Cordova apartments, received them on his death.

Last January Miss La Motte bought the pieces through the advertising columns of The Evening Star. She decided to contribute them to the Lincoln collection owned by the Chicago society.

Both the table and chairs appear in the picture showing Lincoln signing the Emancipation Proclamation and his cabinet members looking on.

The Chicago Historical society, Clark street at North avenue, has a notable addition to the Lincoln memorabilia. It is the table upon which the Emancipation Proclamation was drafted over 80 years ago in the offices of President Lincoln at the White House. For having served such a dramatic purpose the table is unaffected in character; it

Chi. Tribune - 7-25-43

is a rather plain square table with a top and body of crotched mahogany veneer and legs of solid mahogany.

The table is in an excellent state of preservation. An interesting feature about it is the peculiar arrangement of drawers for papers and documents. Miss Ellen La Motte of Washington, D. C., gave the table and two oak chairs, which also had seen service in Lincoln's office, to the Chicago Historical society.

The history of the table and chairs is of interest. Lincoln gave them

to Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase, who had formerly been a member of his cabinet as secretary of the treasury. The three pieces were inherited by his daughter, Mrs. Kate Chase Sprague. During her later years, Mrs. Sprague sold the chairs to a Nathan Sprague in 1888. After passing thru several hands, the furniture finally came into the possession of Miss La Motte and thru her courtesy has now reached its final resting place in the Chicago Historical society's beautiful building.

Whereabouts of Lincoln's Desk Is Moot Question

Connecticut Claims Valuable Piece of Furniture Is in State Library

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Godard's Story

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Burgdorf said in his statement that he gave Lincoln another desk and kept the original at his home, (1027 Eighth Street, N. W.), Washington, D. C.

Through Lincoln's kindness, Burgdorf said, he obtained a place in the Treasury Department, where he remained until Morgan's time.

The truthfulness of Burgdorf's statement was attested to by other treasury employes at the time, some of whom had known Burgdorf since 1866.

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